

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the second paragraph on page 15 as follows:

Fig. 4 is a diagram schematically showing the structure of the light branching apparatus of this embodiment. The light branching apparatus 103 has eight dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₈ ~~122₁ to 122₈~~ provided for first to eighth branch paths 125₁ to 125₈ ~~123₁ to 123₈~~ which are separated for every wavelength range of an optical fiber 121. In this example, the dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₄ ~~122₁ to 122₄~~ correspond to the dispersion compensator 114 and the dispersion compensator circuits 123₅ to 123₈ ~~122₅ to 122₈~~ correspond to the dispersion compensator 115 ~~114~~ in Fig. 3. The dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₈ can compensate the wavelength dispersion at once on all the wavelength ranges to be transferred through the light branching apparatus 103. Commercially available circuit elements which are different in a compensation amount but identical in the size can be used as the dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₈. Therefore, the dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₈ are selected and used to have the compensation characteristic determined in accordance with the dispersion amount determined based on the size or other property of the light branching apparatus 103 using an optical signal of a predetermined wavelength as a reference. In this embodiment, the branch paths 125₁ to 125₄ through the dispersion compensator circuits 123₁ to 123₄ are connected on the main transmission path to the first light receiver station 102, and the branch paths 125₅ to 125₈ through the dispersion compensator circuits 123₅ to 123₈ are connected on the sub transmission path to the second light receiver station 104.